

FREEDOM

April 23, 2004

Watch

A photograph showing a soldier in a tan uniform and helmet on the right, handing several boxes of '12 Candy Canes' to a group of Afghan children on the left. The children are looking up at the soldier with interest. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

926th Engineers spread cheer to Afghan kids
Cover Story Page 6/7

25th ID (L) assumes responsibility of CJTF-180
Page 3



Photo by Air Force Master Sgt. Jeff Szczechowski

Lending a helping hand

Air Force Staff Sgt. Nikole Tipton, 455th Expeditionary Operations Group spreads some American Goodwill at the Kapisa Orphanage in the village of Chargar, Afghanistan, during a visit April 8. Approximately 40 members of the group distributed hundreds of pounds of clothing, food and toys to the more than 250 children living at the orphanage as part of the 455th EOG's Adopt-a-Village program.

Contents

Page 3: The 25th ID (L) and 10th Mtn. Div. transfer authority

Page 4: Water purification teams keep coalition hydrated

Page 5: Easter Services bring OEF members together in faith; Power flows through Afghanistan

Page 6/7: Troops adopt Afghan villages

Page 8: Rebuilt university opens doors to students

Page 9: Fuels teams provide food to keep birds in flight

Page 10: Interview tips suggest ways to talk with media

Page 11: Airman shows nightly movie to members of the 455th EOG

Cover photo by Pfc. Cheryl A. Ransford, 17th Public Affairs Detachment
Capt. Troy DuMond, 416th Eng. Group, hands out candy canes to the students of Uzbashi Secondary School. The engineers visit the Qal'ey-Ye Group villages and the school once a month.



By Mark Baker

Pvt. Murphy's Law

Freedom Watch falls under the supervision of the Combined Forces Command - Afghanistan, and is published weekly.

CFC-A Commander – Lt. Gen. David Barno
Public Affairs Officer – Lt. Col. Matt Beevers

Freedom Watch, an Army publication, is produced by the 17th Public Affairs Detachment at Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan.

Freedom Watch

Commander – Maj. Steven J. Wollman
NCOIC – Staff Sgt. Monica R. Garreau
Editor – Sgt. Stephanie L. Carl
Journalists – Sgt. Frank Magni,
Pfc. Cheryl A. Ransford, Pfc. Chris Stump

In accordance with AR 360-1, this Army newspaper is an authorized publication for members of the U.S. military overseas.

Contents of the *Freedom Watch* are not necessarily the official view of, or endorsed by, the U.S. government, the Department of Defense or the Department of the Army.

All submissions are subject to editing by the 17th Public Affairs Detachment, located in Bldg. 425, Room 107, Bagram Air Base.

Visit the CENTCOM web site at www.centcom.mil and click on the *Freedom Watch* or Forces in Afghanistan link at the bottom of the page to get to the *Freedom Watch*. To be added to the weekly distribution list, e-mail carls@baf.cjtf180.army.mil

Olson assumes authority of CJTF-180

Story by
Sgt. Stephanie L. Carl
17th Public Affairs Detachment

BAGRAM AIR BASE, Afghanistan — Under the hot sun reminiscent of the tropical weather he recently left behind, Maj. Gen. Eric T. Olson, 25th Infantry Division (Light) commander, assumed authority of Combined Joint Task Force-180 April 15.

Representatives from the various elements of the task force stood in formation on Bagram Air Base's "Steel Beach." They gathered to honor Maj. Gen. Lloyd J. Austin III and the rest of the 10th Mountain Division, who after nine months of official command and approximately 11 months in Afghanistan, are returning to Fort Drum, N.Y.

"The 10th Mtn. Div. is going home to rejoin the Army's ready forces and to prepare for whatever missions may come their way," said Lt. Gen. David Barno, Combined Forces Command – Afghanistan commander.

Barno went on to describe the origin of the 10th Mtn. Div., which began in World War II.

The Soldiers of the 10th

Mtn. Div. fought under "...difficult conditions, through rugged mountains, miserable winter weather and against a wily, tough enemy," said Barno. "Exactly the same conditions faced by the grandsons and granddaughters of the those great warriors of World War II who have fought here in Afghanistan."

As the 10th Mtn. Div. departs, nearly five thousand Soldiers from the Tropic Lightning Division take their place, flying the division colors in a combat zone for the first time since the Vietnam War. These Soldiers will serve in Afghanistan for approximately a year.

"Your task here is the same," Barno said to Olson and his leaders. "You are here to inspire and motivate this combined, joint team to success."

Olson is assuming authority over more than 13,000 personnel, representing more than 18 countries.

"Each passing month, more countries join the task force," said Austin. "Each passing day, the citizens of this country enjoy a greater sense of security and stability. The enemy's ranks of leaders and fighters have been significantly dimin-



Photo by Staff Sgt. Monica R. Garreau

The 25th ID (L) color guard posts the division colors while the 10th Mtn. Div. colors are retired during the CJTF-180 transfer of authority April 15.



Photo by Maj. Steven J. Wollman

Maj. Gen. Eric T. Olson, 25th ID (L) commander signs his assumption of command orders April 15. Olson, along with Command Sgt. Maj. Franklin G. Ashe (right), will lead CJTF-180 for the next year.

ished through their destruction or capture."

The mission of CJTF-180 is to conduct full-spectrum operations to prevent the re-emergence of terror organizations and set the conditions for the growth of democracy in Afghanistan. This is a mission that Olson and the 25th ID (L) vow to continue.

"We plan on continuing Operation Mountain Storm," said Olson, "and other operations may emerge to support voting and the election process. As our combat missions succeed, we may see more recon-

struction operations, (though) we are able to shift intensity at a moment's notice."

As members of the coalition continue facing the daily challenges that come with Operation Enduring Freedom, Olson stressed his pride in commanding the international forces that his division is now a part of.

"We are proud to be joining your ranks — shoulder-to-shoulder," he said. And paraphrasing their division song to his Hawaii-based Soldiers, "We are on the verge of adding another story..."

KBR sanitizes water for Bagram troops

Story and photo by
Pfc. Cheryl Ransford
17th Public Affairs Detachment

BAGRAM AIR BASE, Afghanistan – Though coalition forces have been in Afghanistan nearly three years, it wasn't until recently that a steady supply of potable water became available.

Until December of last year, all water was purified by military water purification specialists, using a 3,000 gallon-per-hour reverse osmosis water purification unit.

"Due to the limits of the equipment being used, they were only able to purify water for facilities that required potable water, such as dining facilities and hospitals," said Jason Douglass, water supervisor, Kellogg, Brown and Root.

All other facilities, such as showers, used chlorinated well water, said Douglass. Though this makes the water potable, it's still unsafe to consume because it isn't stored in sanitized tanks.

Now, the water used on Bagram, Camp Phoenix and soon at Kandahar, is purified by civilians employed by Kellogg, Brown and Root, using the Dual Media Purification System, providing an abundance of potable water.

KBR also has chlorination points at safe houses and the Kabul compound, where they add chlorine to well water. However, this process doesn't completely purify the water.

Clean water would not be available to



Brian Sawyer, a truck driver with Kellogg, Brown and Root, replaces the hose on the truck after downloading water.

service members without the work done by the civilians running the water purification points.

"The process we use in Bagram and Camp Phoenix begins with water being pumped from pre-existing wells into raw-water bags. It is then filtered through the media filter, which contains a bed of granular media and anthracite, to remove

suspended solids," said Douglass.

"After that process is done, the water goes through the GAC filter, made up of granular activated carbon to remove taste, odor, smell and dissolve organics to make it safe for consumption," he said.

Once the water goes through the GAC filter, it receives a chlorine additive and then gets pumped out to the two 50,000-gallon storage bladders for the trucks to pick up.

Approximately 350,000 gallons of water are pumped into trucks to be distributed to different locations in Bagram everyday. These include the showers, rest-rooms, dining facilities, hospitals and all other locations that have tap water, said Douglass.

The process continues 24 hours a day, with a pair of two-person crews, said Raymon Espinoza, a KBR water operator.

"The water is tested once an hour by us, as well as once a week by preventative medicine. The water is also tested for its chlorine level before it is uploaded into the trucks," said Espinoza.

The trucks come in for uploading approximately every 30-45 minutes, and take seven to eight minutes to fill with water. They take the same amount of time to download into the facilities, said Douglass.

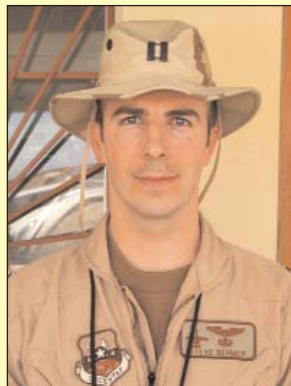
KBR has been purifying water for service members and civilians deployed to Afghanistan since July 2002.

Enduring Voices

How do you plan to invest your extra income from Afghanistan?



Staff Sgt. Joseph Marshall
E Btry, 7th FA 10th Mtn. Div.
"I am going to use the extra money to pay off bills."



AF Capt. Steve Behmer
355th EFS
"I am going to put the money into mutual funds."



Spec. Ernst Bennett
125th Sig. Bn, 25th ID (L)
"I am going to use the money for a down payment on a house."



1st Sgt. Lyle Mader
395th Ordnance Co.
"I am going to invest the money for my retirement."

Easter services bring 'families' together

Story and photo by
Sgt. Stephanie L. Carl
17th Public Affairs Detachment

BAGRAM AIR BASE, Afghanistan — The only indications that it was Easter were the colorful rabbits and eggs hanging from the ceiling of the Viper Dining Facility. There was no other commercialization left to taint the holiday that means so much to Christians.

Left behind, however, was the true meaning of Easter — a day to celebrate the resurrection of Christ and the atonement of sin. This was the focus of most who attended Easter Services here April 11.

"Easter isn't just a special time for Christians," said Lightning Task Force-725 Chaplain (Capt.) Scott Crossfield. "It's a special time for families. This year, we have many people away from their families, away from their center of faith."

With that in mind, Crossfield presented the sermon, "What did Christ communicate through his resurrection?" to Protestant members of the coalition. There were also services for Catholics to attend, including a night vigil April 10.

"We have people out risking their lives here,



Chaplain (Capt.) Scott Crossfield raises a goblet of "wine" during Easter service April 11.

even today," said Crossfield. "Knowing this, all the superficial parts of holidays fall to the wayside and we focus on what the holiday is really about."

To Crossfield and the Coalition Praise Band, which performed during the service,

the holiday wasn't just about Christ being risen, but also about family.

"In this environment, we tend to be spiritually-strained," said 2nd Lt. Jennie Wunderlich, LTF-725 accountable officer. Wunderlich performs with the Coalition Praise Band, which currently has members representing practically every branch of service here, not to mention some foreign services.

Wunderlich said she feels the service gave everyone a chance to come together in faith, but also to develop a family with those around them. She also stressed the opportunities afforded by the praise band, inviting anyone to come out and participate.

"I don't always get to come to the services," said Spc. Brian Putney, 368th Military Intelligence Battalion, "but when I do, I always enjoy being around everyone."

In keeping with the family atmosphere, dining facilities also recognized the holiday, and attempted to recreate what people might have, were they not deployed. A festive meal of ham, stuffing and sweet potatoes was available. Many units took the time to dine together, reinforcing the attitude that the unit truly is a second family.

Bagram Power Plant keeps base running

Story and photo by
Pfc. Chris Stump
17th Public Affairs Detachment

BAGRAM AIR BASE, Afghanistan — Without a large power supply, the coalition troops here wouldn't be working and living in the same conditions they are now. Units would have to supply their own power to accomplish missions and personnel would likely be using flashlights instead of overhead lights, taking fewer hot showers and eating less hot chow.

Military engineers from the 249th Engineer Battalion working with civilian contractors keep Bagram Power Plant up and running so coalition troops and civilian employees can live in relative comfort in an area where no real power supply existed just a few years ago.

The plant's 32 generators supply power to all of Bagram Air Base, said Sgt. 1st Class Robert Spaulding, plant supervisor, 249th Eng. Bn. The plant has 16 above-ground generators and 16 sub-terrain generators that power everything from light bulbs in B-huts and communications equipment to computer systems and floodlights at the gates.

A team of six civilian contractors oversees the operation of the plant, with two personnel on duty at all times. They monitor the generators and make sure the power keeps going day and night, while also being responsible for the preventative maintenance of the machines.

The generators only have to produce eight to 16,000 kilowatts per day, using an average of 18,000 liters of diesel fuel. But Spaulding said Bagram still isn't close to using the plant's capacity.



Ken Hopwood, a contractor with International American Products Co., monitors gauges at the Bagram Power Plant.

"The system can produce up to 40,000 kilowatts a day, but we use less than half that," said Spaulding. "There's plenty more energy there, so people can go buy whatever it is they want to plug in, there's no worry about energy conservation."

Even though there's no huge worry about energy conservation, the air-conditioning in the new living quarters being built is 90 percent more efficient than the units in tents with hard floors, he said. Ten of the new units can be run using the power it takes to run

See Power, Page 10

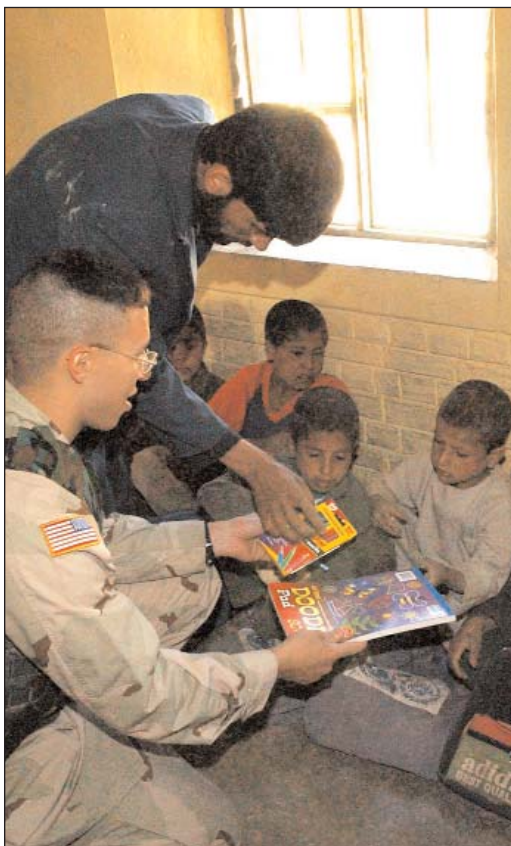
Adopt-a-Village



Children from the Uzbashi Secondary School dig through a box of school supplies. Soldiers from Bagram Air Base deliver school supplies to the students at least once a month.



Sp. Timothy Overstreet, 41st Eng. Bn., hands pens and pencils to the children at Uzbashi Secondary School.



Capt. Gabriel Colwell, CJTF-180 legal officer, hands a coloring book and magic markers to the Afghan children at Uzbashi Secondary School.

Soldiers distribute supplies, toys to Afghan students

Story and photos by
Pfc. Cheryl Ransford
17th Public Affairs Detachment

Qal'ey-Ye GROUP, Afghanistan – Afghan children from the villages of Qal'ey-Ye Goley, Qale'ey-Ye Yuzbashi and Qal'ey-Ye Ahmed Khan sit on the hard floor of a school house without proper supplies needed for learning.

Engineers from Bagram Air Base have adopted these villages and take needed supplies to the villages and the schoolhouse about once a month.

Soldiers from 205th Engineer Battalion adopted the villages in August 2003. Since then, they have delivered more than 7,500 pounds of supplies to the people of these three villages, said Sgt. Brett Duncan, 205th Engineer Battalion.

"We started with just wanting to deliver shoes to the villagers, since they had none or just plastic sandals. Since then we have delivered not only

enough shoes for everyone in the villages, but also clothing, school supplies, lumber and food," he said.

This set of villages was selected for the Adopt-a-Village Program because they seem to have the most need for outside help, said Duncan.

"Since they don't have a water supply, they don't have agriculture and are forced to rely on others for food and money," he added. "When we first came into this village they were actually disassembling the landmines and selling the explosives."

Now that the 205th Eng. Bn., Louisiana Army National Guard, and the 416th Eng. Group, Ohio Army National Guard, are completing their deployments, the villages and the school will be passed on to the 926th Engineer Battalion, U.S. Army Reserve, to continue with the work and progress they have made, said Sgt. Carlos Soto, 926th Eng. Bn.

"We have made nine visits to the villages and school house. When we



Soldiers from Bagram Air Base spent time with the children while they were handing out school supplies.

come down the road to the villages we start recognizing people that we have seen before, and they start recognizing us as well. When they realize we are coming they come out of the wood-work to see what we have brought to them this time," said Soto. "It's like Christmas for them. They get so excited."

"(We) are scheduled to go to the villages once a month, but if supplies allow, we will go to the villages more often," said Soto.

During trips, some of the villagers can be seen wearing clothes received from the Soldiers, he said.

"It really makes you feel good to know you are making a difference just by looking around and seeing the smiles on their faces," added Soto.

Even with all the supplies that have been delivered to the people of these villages, there is still more work to be done, he said.

"We have two platoons of carpenters in the battalion, and we are working on getting desks, chairs and benches built for the school," said Soto.

If the materials can be obtained and the projects completed, these things can become reality for the Afghan children.

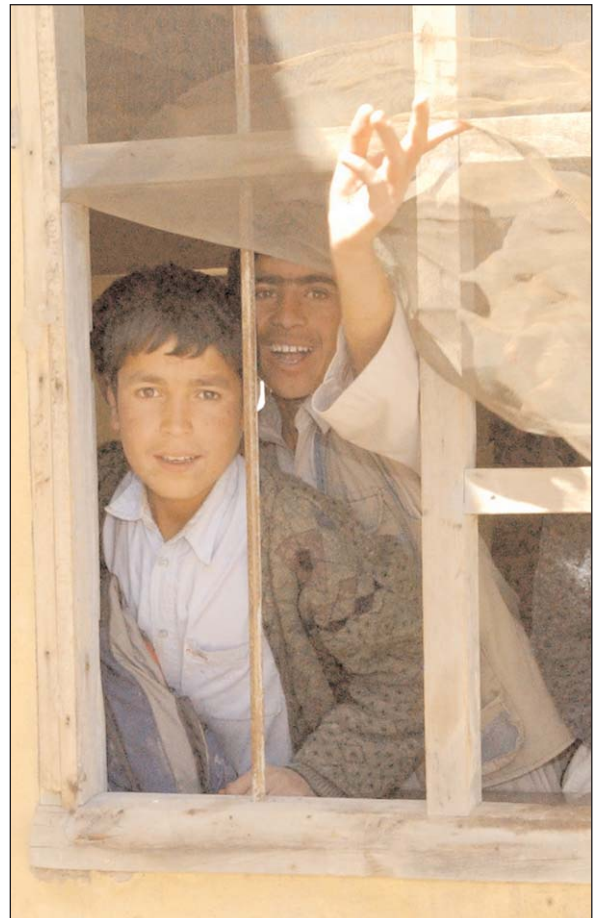
Right now, the only thing in each classroom is a chalkboard on one wall, for the instructor to write on. The children in each of the eight classrooms have to sit on the hard cement floor, some in rows as if they had desks, others along the wall, he said.

"We are also working with a couple retailers in the U.S. to see about getting playground equipment for the children to play on at the school. Right now, the play area is empty except for a tree in the middle of the courtyard," he added.

Making a difference in the lives of the Afghan people is what service members are here for, said Duncan.

"This is something that makes being out here a little easier," he said. "You can physically look around and see how you are helping the people of Afghanistan."

To help make a difference in the lives of the people of Afghanistan and for information on the Adopt-a-Village Program, contact Lt. Col. Robin Milonas, with the 364th Civil Affairs Battalion, at 231-3408 or 231-3409. To make donations for the villages, contact Capt. Kyle Dubose, with 926th Eng. Bn., at 231-5312.



Students from Uzbashi Secondary School wave from a window in their classroom. Engineers from Bagram have adopted the school.

Higher learning returns to Bamian

PRT rebuilds only area university

Story and photo

by Lance Cpl. John E. Lawson, Jr.

Combat Correspondent

BAMIAN, Afghanistan – During the Taliban's reign over Afghanistan, the Afghan people weren't afforded much opportunity for education. The Taliban has been removed from power and more opportunities to learn are being presented to the people of a country plagued by decades of war.

The Bamian Provincial Reconstruction Team re-opened Bamian University here April 3 during a ceremony attended by numerous area dignitaries and included comments from

Mohammad Abdul Karim Khalili, Afghanistan's vice president, Dr. Mohammad Sharif Faiz, minister of higher education, Mohammad Rahim Aliyar, governor of Bamian province, and David Sedney, deputy chief of mission from the U.S. Embassy, Afghanistan.

The university was once the pinnacle of higher learning in the province of Bamian, teaching history, agriculture, medicine, language and science to its nearly 500 students.

When the province fell to the Taliban in 1998, the terrorists closed the university and used it as a headquarters. As a result, the university received significant damage during the 2001 U.S. bombing campaigns against the Taliban. Despite the damage, civil affairs experts determined the university was salvageable. Only 10 percent of the structure was reusable, but according to Lt. Col. David J. Pirie, Bamian Provincial Reconstruction Team chief of staff, the desire for a university was strong.

Coalition forces established the Bamian PRT in March 2003, which has since provided tools to recreate or establish the basic infrastructures to build area communities within the province. Additionally the Bamian PRT, run by coalition members from New Zealand, works with the leadership of the province to ensure stability and focus on the future. The reconstructed university is the result of such interaction.

After a year of reconstruction and about \$600,000 donated by both the United States and New Zealand, the university was reopened with a ribbon-cutting ceremony.

New Zealand Defense Force Group Capt. Gavin Howse,

Bamian PRT commander, also spoke at the ceremony, calling the university "not only a memory of past glory, but a sign of future success" for the Afghan people.

"Education is essential. Without education you can't develop. With the university, the Afghan people can learn and become (more) literate. They have the opportunity to better themselves and to grow," said Howse.

Other dignitaries from Afghanistan and coalition nations, as well as teachers and future students, filled the university's courtyard surrounded by the three newly reconstructed buildings.

After the ceremony, guests toured the 14 classrooms and other facilities, including the library and computer lab with more than ten computers.



New Zealand Defense Force Group Captain Gavin Howse, Bamian Provincial Reconstruction Team commander, speaks at Bamian University during a ceremony here April 3. After the university received significant damage during U.S. bombing campaigns against the Taliban in 2001, civil affairs experts determined the structure to be salvageable. The Bamian Provincial Reconstruction Team, comprised of coalition members from New Zealand, the United States, the United Kingdom and Afghanistan, coordinated the rebuilding and re-opened the university. It is the only institute of higher learning of its type in the Bamian Province.

As the tour group entered the library, one Afghan exclaimed, "This is the biggest library I've ever seen!" as he gazed over the shelves containing hundreds of books on subjects ranging from physics to agriculture.

Zeinab Sajadi, a teacher and manager of the library, said, "The people are very happy for the opening of the university in Bamian."

According to Dr. Mohammad Sarwer Mawlaie, Bamian University dean, the university anticipates teaching 1,000 students in its first year, and hopes to double that number by the end of its second year.

Effat Mostasharnia, a university professor, said she was "very excited" and the students were "very happy" to have the university open in the Bamian area.

The university has scheduled programs in education and agriculture, with a goal to establish a 50 percent female enrollment in the near future.

"This project, as well as the PRT's other projects, is successful because of a proper balance between security and reconstruction," he added. "It's teamwork – Afghanistan, the United States, the United Kingdom, and New Zealand (the four nations in the Bamian PRT) — working together to make things happen. It's one mission, one team."

The Bamian PRT and area Afghans have identified more than 30 other projects worth more than \$3.5 million, which are scheduled for completion during 2004. These projects will support local government infrastructures, bridges, agriculture rehabilitation and training.

Fuelers keep aircraft in flight

Mission needs keep refueling teams on their toes 24/7

Story and photo
by AF Master Sgt. Jeff Szczechowski
455th Expeditionary Operations Group

BAGRAM AIR BASE, Afghanistan — Back home, when a thirsty Air Force aircraft needs to be gassed up, fuels management units have a 30-minutes or less response time to provide the fuel.

At Bagram Air Base, the fuels unit has put its own stamp on the POL — petroleum, oils and lubricants — tradition of time-

ly fuels service. When fuels operators respond to the refueling needs of the A-10 Thunderbolt II here, their response time is more like 30-seconds-or-less.

Master Sgt. Eddie Camou, 455th Expeditionary Operations Group, fuels superintendent, said that his flight coordinates closely with the A-10 side of the house, so that when any aircraft land, one or more 6,000-gallon R-11 refuel units are positioned on the flightline, ready to deliver their jet fuel so the aircraft can get right back up in the sky.

"Before the aircraft chocks hit the ground, we're already standing by to service them," he said.

Operating on two shifts around-the-clock, the seven-man fuels team here also

serves Army UH-60 Blackhawk helicopters and any of the large-frame cargo aircraft that don't fuel up at the Army-run forward area refueling point.

Camou said that timely, uninterrupted fuels support is all the more meaningful at Bagram because of the magnitude of the missions.

"You see these A-10s take off loaded down (with weapons), and some come back empty," he said. "We know we're supporting the aircraft that are supporting our people on the ground getting fired upon."

Three airmen who work hard to make sure the "Warthogs" are ready to employ their firepower whenever needed are Senior Airman Ellery Johnson and Airmen 1st Class Matthew Abner and Omar Foster, all deployed from Hurlburt Field, Fla.

Camou describes them as "eager to work and extremely competent fuels professionals."

Besides issuing an average of 25,000 gallons of JP-8 daily, POL also oversees the storage and issue of liquid oxygen, which is used for aviators' breathing oxygen.

Since LOX has to be obtained outside the country, Tech. Sgt. Robbie Bebee said he has to keep a sharp eye on LOX levels to ensure that this critical product is always available.

Two other areas that require unique skills beyond the fuels distribution arena are the fuels accounting and fuels quality control elements. Like Bebee in LOX, these positions require a person to hold a special experience identifier designation.

Staff Sgt. Chester Robbins is the accountant. He documents all fuels and LOX transactions, and ensures that all fuels lab samples are completed on the dates that testing is required.

The resident lab technician is Staff Sgt. Shannon Walline. The four R-11s assigned to the fuels flight require quality control analysis every seven days, to ensure that only clean, dry fuel is issued to the aircraft.

Fuel is tested for water and particle content. Walline also tests for an anti-static additive, which is mixed in with the fuel to minimize the chance of a static spark igniting a catastrophic fire.

Bebee said it's easy to be motivated here because "this is what it's all about." He said that it's not often that the Air Force gets deployed this far forward.

"For the Air Force, we're on the front lines," he said, and he likes it.

It's a feeling that seems to bind most Airmen here at Bagram Air Base.



Airman 1st Class Omar Foster, 455th EOG fuels flight, adjusts the throttle of his R-11 refuel unit during an A-10 Thunderbolt II refuel operation. Foster is deployed from Hurlburt Field, Fla.

Media awareness key to telling coalition story

Story by Spc. Francis J. Horton
Task Force Victory Public Affairs

BAGRAM AIR BASE, Afghanistan — The civilian media is up and about in Afghanistan, and plan on visiting many of the Provincial Reconstruction Teams in the area.

Among the current visiting media are Time Magazine, Stars and Stripes, The Wall Street Journal, The New York Times and The Honolulu Advertiser.

Terry Boyd of the Stars and Stripes visited the PRT at Gardez, Afghanistan recently to talk to some of the Soldiers about what they do on a regular basis. Boyd was looking for stories which would interest the every day service member. Among the people he interviewed were cooks and communications experts.

Gardez is located in a remote part of Afghanistan high in the mountains, and Boyd wanted to know how the Soldiers did their jobs and got along.

He also talked to civil affairs Soldiers and asked about their progress in the country, and visited many of the sites of new schools and clinics in the Gardez area.

According to Combined Forces Command-Afghanistan, it is fine to talk to reporters when you are in the field, as long as they have been accredited by the CFC-A Public Affairs Office. Accredited reporters will be carrying CFC-A proof of credentials.

Also, it's important to remember to report any interviews through your chain of command. This report should include the name of the journalist, what organization they are with and what kind of questions they asked you. These reports should get passed on to the public affairs officer.

Service members should always remember Operational Security first and fore-

most when talking to reporters. If it sounds like something the enemy might be able to use, or if it's something the reporter should not use, it shouldn't be said, according to Col. David Bennett, Task Force Victory Public Affairs officer. Everything you say to a reporter is "on the record," and expect them to use it if they can, he said. If you do happen to let something slip, ask the reporter to disregard the information as it is sensitive to the security of the service men and inform your public affairs officer of your concern.

He offered a few basic rules to follow when dealing with the media. The main rule revolves around always telling the truth, even if you don't know the answer. "I don't know," is a perfectly acceptable answer, and then you can direct the questions to someone who will know, or your public affairs officer. Never guess, and always discuss only what you know. In other words, stay in your lane.

Other rules include:

■ "No comment" is not a good answer. It suggests that there might have been a mistake made on the military's part. If there is something you cannot discuss with the reporters, explain why, and use command messages.

■ Command messages are phrases or sentences promoting the military and your fellow service members. For example, if you are questioned about future operations, work on an answer describing how everyone is ready for any mission you might be called upon to fulfill, without giving specifics about the missions. Command messages are also good to use if there is an answer you don't know or cannot answer.

■ Above all, be relaxed with the reporter and be sincere, be genuine. Treat the reporter as if they are a close friend. Look at the reporter and disregard the

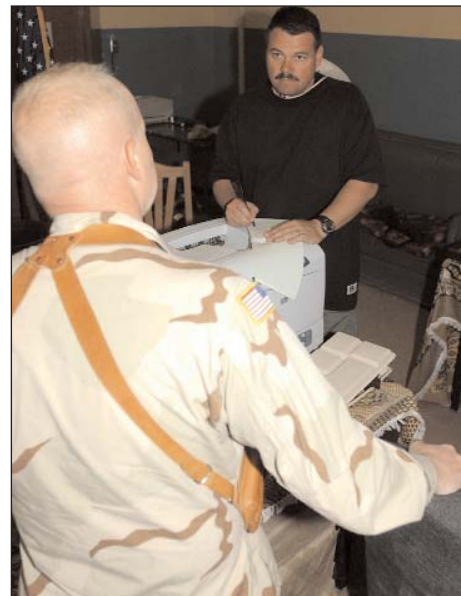


Photo by Staff Sgt. Monica R. Garreau

William Cole, a reporter with The Honolulu Advertiser, interviews Sgt. 1st Class Glen Robinson, CJTF-180 senior operations career counselor, on Bagram Air Base April 12. Cole was in country to cover the efforts of Hawaii-based soldiers deployed here.

camera as much as possible.

If you stumble over your words, just keep going. If it is an on-camera interview, stop, collect your thoughts and start over. The reporters and crew will edit out any fumbles.

Talking to the media is a good chance to tell your part of the coalition story. However, if you aren't comfortable with talking to the media, you don't have to. If any reporters badger or keep asking inappropriate questions, report it to your commanding officer or public affairs officer.

For more information on the civilian media, talk to your unit public affairs officer or representative.

Power, continued from Page 5

one of the tent units.

All this energy makes its way to the troops' offices, chow halls and living quarters via a mix of above and underground wires that are maintained by a force of civilian contractors from Inglett and Stubbs.

These contractors make sure the power keeps coming with as few interruptions as possible.

"The power plant has had few outages," said Spaulding. "There have been only five outages since December, caused by either weather, people outside the plant digging or running lines over."

Five is actually a very small number, considering all the work that is going on around Bagram and the climate he said.

"The government has spent in excess of \$30 million to make sure there's a constant power supply for operations here," he said.

And the money is not only being spent on keeping the system working, it's being spent on making improvements for more efficient power usage and distribution for the troops on Bagram.

"People take power for granted here," said Stephen Edge, Inglett and Stubbs' Afghanistan project manager. "If it weren't for the power plants, individual units would be responsible for providing their own power, and they probably wouldn't have luxuries like air conditioning, heat and television."

"Our job here is to make sure each Soldier has a constant, reliable power source to live comfortably with as many amenities as possible."

NCO boosts morale with nightly movies

Story and photos by
Master Sgt. Jeff Szczechowski
455th Expeditionary Operations Group

BAGRAM AIR BASE, Afghanistan – When the sun sets on Camp Cunningham, the outdoor break area and meeting place known as the “Pradotorium” begins to buzz with a little more activity than it does earlier in the day.

This wooden deck area, similar to one that might be built in someone’s backyard, sits adjacent to the 455th Expeditionary Operations Group headquarters building, and is strewn with patio chairs, a couple of wooden benches and even a hammock.

A Plexiglas-covered bulletin board located there is posted with Air Force News stories and photos featuring Bagram Airmen, plus the latest camp news and information.

At almost anytime of the day, someone can be seen relaxing there, taking in the sun, socializing or reading. It’s Camp Cunningham’s version of the “village square.”

After dark, the deck takes on an added dimension. That’s when it becomes an open-air movie theater, a drive-in without the cars. One sure bet at Bagram Air Base is that Air Force Staff Sgt. Eugene Prado, a member of the 455th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron, will be there every night to show a movie.

He uses a slide-show projector that was previously sitting unused in the Security Forces Squadron collecting dust. With the projector in hand, he found that he was able to attach cables from a DVD player into it, giving him the capability to show videos, crisp and clear, on a movie screen salvaged from the Services Division, which is responsible for helping to boost the morale of deployed airmen. The screen, which looks like it was tailor-made to fit the dimensions of the break area, was found in the 455th EOG HQ building basement.

To complete his mini-theater, Prado uses a surround-sound speaker system, which he installs before each movie, producing theater-style audio quality.

Like the proprietor of a neighborhood business, he gets to his Pradotorium as early as he can, straightening up the chairs, setting up his equipment and sur-

veying the area with a manager’s eye to make sure everything’s ready for that night’s feature. He does everything but make the popcorn.

Air Force Capt. David Borchardt, 455th ESFS commander, first coined the term, Pradotorium, in honor of his volunteer-minded NCO. Without fail, 15-30 people will gather there every night to watch the movie. Many others stroll by and stop for a few minutes to catch a few good lines or an action scene on the way to and

makes him feel good about himself.

“I like doing it. Whatever makes the ‘town’ happy,” he said. “I try to make things better. Since I have the time, why not help out?”

He added that when he’s outside setting up the video equipment, he knows he’s put one more work day behind him, and he’s another step closer to getting back home to McChord Air Force Base, Wash., and his fiancé.

Prado hints that a little bit of pride plays a role in the enjoyment he gets from being the person the camp looks to for their nightly movie.

“I feel good about what I’m doing, especially when people start talking about me and telling me they’re glad I’m doing this,” he said.

Air Force Staff Sgt. Nikole Tipton, 455th EOG, personnel support for contingency operations office, could be described as a regular at the nightly movie. She said Prado’s pride is evident.

“I really like what he’s doing, and you can see that he’s very proud of what he does,” she said.

The most popular movies, perhaps not surprisingly at a deployed location like Bagram, are comedies, said Prado. A recent showing of “Finding Nemo” brought out one of the larger crowds.

His efforts are a big help to the two-person Services team here, which keeps very busy trying to find fun things for all of the men and women assigned here to do.

“He just stepped up and took over a program that could have fallen to Services. His efforts free us up to take on other things,” said Air Force Tech. Sgt. Thearsea Smith, 455th EOG Services Flight superintendent. “He’s out there every night, in

addition to his day job, setting up the movie and taking it down.”

The nightly movies are a “great morale booster,” she said.

Prado said that his nightly movies are beneficial to everyone, including himself. He said the Pradotorium feature – which sometimes becomes a double – brings people in the camp closer.

“If you help out, you help yourself (by making time go by faster), and you’re helping everyone,” he said.

“We are all far from home, but I’m trying to make it as much like home as possible.”



During the day, Staff Sgt. Eugene Prado is the 455th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron Pass and ID NCO in charge. When his duty day is over, he sets up a movie projector and speakers, and plays one or two movies, every night without fail, for members of the 455th Expeditionary Operations Group.

from their B-huts.

But running the “Pradotorium” isn’t the only thing he does here. Prado’s deployed mission keeps him busy during the day.

He is the NCO in charge of the Security Forces Squadron Pass and ID office. His shop is open seven-days a week, nine to 12 hours a day, sometimes longer.

Lately, he said he’s been averaging about 70 customers a day. He also helps in other areas of the SFS, whenever needed.

But he still finds the time and energy to make life here better for others when the duty day is finished. He said that showing a movie at the Pradotorium every night

Selfless Service

A photograph of two soldiers in camouflage uniforms and helmets wading through a river. The soldier in the foreground is seen from behind, carrying a large backpack. The soldier in the background is facing forward, also carrying a backpack. The water is dark and turbulent, with white foam from the soldiers' movement. The overall tone is somber and emphasizes the physical and mental challenges of military service.

**Put the welfare of the nation,
the Army, and your subordinates
before your own.**